



2020 Youth Count DC

ICH YOUTH COMMITTEE | 3/25/2021

Background

- The End Youth Homelessness Act of 2014 requires that the District of Columbia Department of Human Services (DHS) conduct an annual census of youth experiencing homelessness.
- DHS has contracted with The Community Partnership (TCP) to conduct the "Homeless Youth Census" (HYC) or "Youth Count DC" since 2015.
- TCP, DHS, and the District of Columbia Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) use the data collected through HYC to inform strategic planning for the youth system.
- Youth Count data are a powerful advocacy tool for providers and other stakeholder groups.



**YOUTH
COUNT | DC**



2020

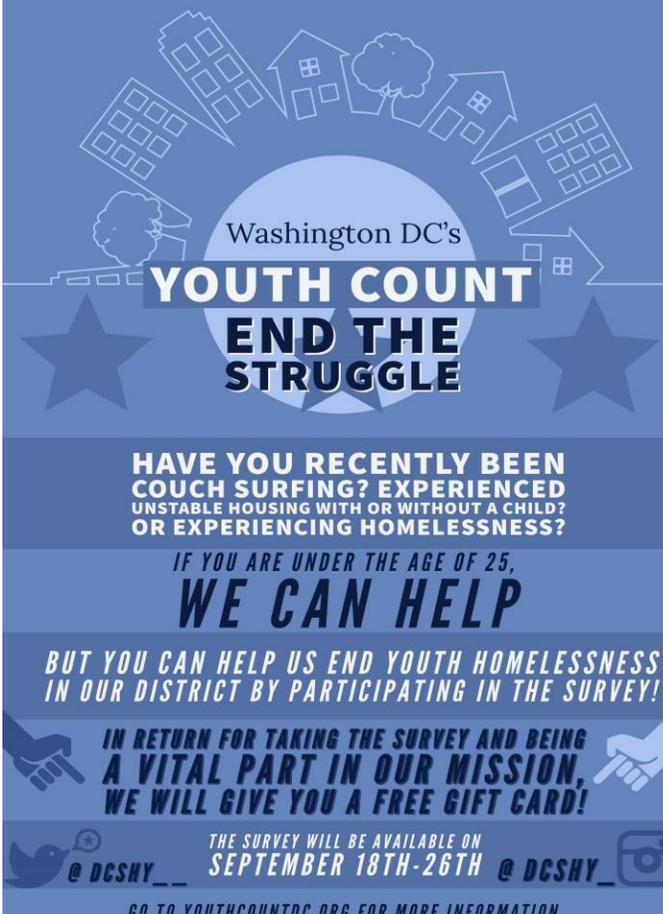
**State Index
on Youth
Homelessness**

Planning

HYC is youth-led and youth-informed. TCP, DHS, and ICH worked to ensure that youth were included in the planning and implementation of the count.

PLANNING

- TCP developed a plan for completing the 2020 HYC with input from DHS, ICH, youth providers, and youth in May.
- TCP leveraged relationships with outreach, drop-in/meal programs, emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, and youth advocacy and community partners to share information regarding the survey throughout their networks and with their peers.
- TCP built the self-administered, web-based survey tool for respondents to submit their info (as opposed to using paper forms) in response to the public health emergency.
- The survey was translated in DC's 5 threshold languages (Spanish, French, Amharic, Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese).
- The community piloted the self-administered survey with the S.H.Y. Youth Action Board and adjusted based on their feedback. To make the tool as accessible as possible, the survey was translated into five languages other than English (determined by those most frequently spoken in the District).
- TCP Youth Fellow, D'Vontay Hope, created a social media campaign geared toward informing youth about the count and encouraging participation in the survey, and TCP worked with the S.H.Y. Youth Action Board to implement it.
- The S.H.Y. Youth Action Board created a promo video and flyer to help spread the word about HYC.



Washington DC's
YOUTH COUNT
END THE STRUGGLE

HAVE YOU RECENTLY BEEN COUCH SURFING? EXPERIENCED UNSTABLE HOUSING WITH OR WITHOUT A CHILD? OR EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS?

IF YOU ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 25,
WE CAN HELP

BUT YOU CAN HELP US END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN OUR DISTRICT BY PARTICIPATING IN THE SURVEY!

IN RETURN FOR TAKING THE SURVEY AND BEING A VITAL PART IN OUR MISSION, WE WILL GIVE YOU A FREE GIFT CARD!

THE SURVEY WILL BE AVAILABLE ON
SEPTEMBER 18TH-26TH @ DCSHY

GO TO [YOUTHCOUNTDC.ORG](https://youthcountdc.org) FOR MORE INFORMATION

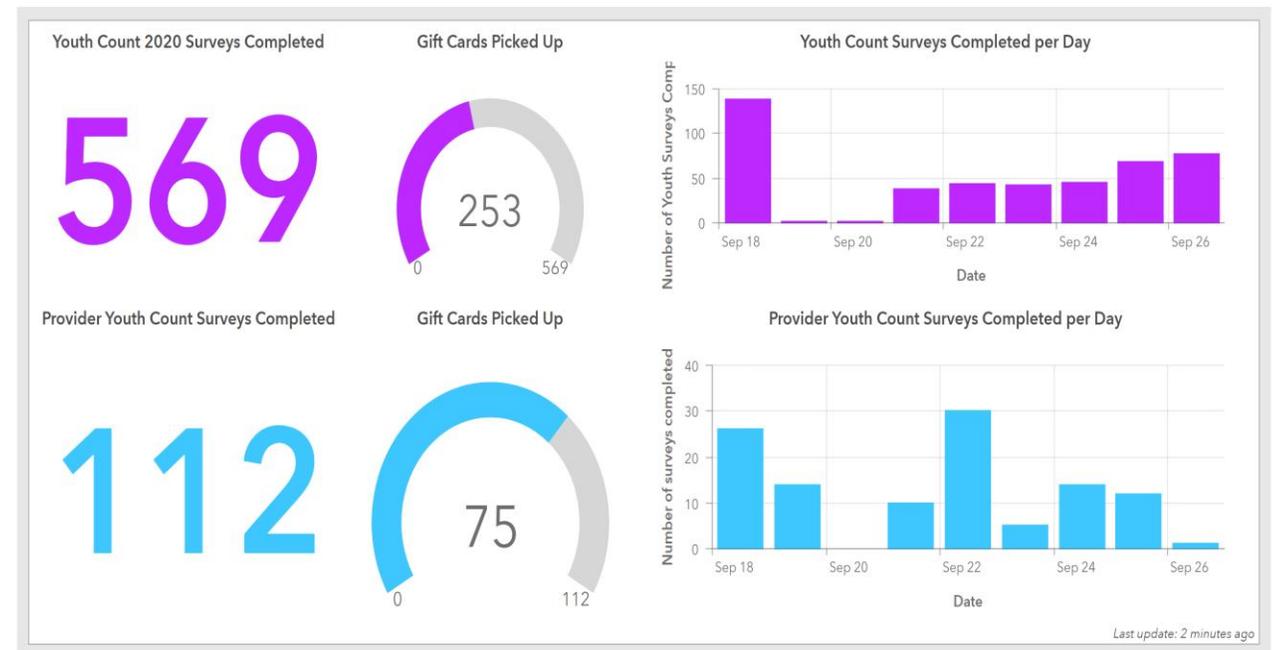
Implementation

- From Sept. 18-26:
 - The survey was live and accessible remotely through a web-based application.
 - Homeless services and community partners provided youth with information on how to complete the survey and/or provided TCP with information on youth served during that week.
 - TCP, DHS, ICH, community partners, and youth were encouraged to share information about the count through their social media channels and interactions with youth. TCP provided partners with a social media toolkit so this was as easy as possible.
 - Youth who completed the survey were able to receive a gift card for their participation. Several community agencies, including the DC Public Library, served as gift card pick up locations so youth could easily and safely receive their gift card.

YOUTH COUNT DC DC Homeless Youth Count [Providers](#) [Take the survey!](#)



Check out how the Youth Count is going by viewing the Youth Count Dashboard.



Data Sources

Data Sources:

Demographic Survey

- Took place over the course of nine days (September 18th to 26th, 2020)
- Self-administered and site-based surveys
- Web and mobile app versions

HMIS

- Emergency Shelter / Transitional Housing programs
- Permanent Housing programs (for de-duplication)



Who was counted?

Age Ranges

- **Transition Age Youth (TAY)**, 18 to 24
- **Minors**, Under 18, in a program without their a parent or guardian

Household Types

- **Unaccompanied youth** (singles)
- **Youth-headed families** (head of household is 24 years old or younger)

Impacts of COVID-19 on HYC Implementation

- TCP, DHS, and ICH felt that it was important to move forward with the HYC despite the public health emergency because HYC provides helpful planning information for the system, though we understood that the precautionary responses to COVID-19 would impact data collection.
- After HYC, TCP followed up with surveyors for feedback and found:
 - 33% of providers said they were not serving as many youth as they would normally be at the time of the HYC;
 - 42% said they couldn't engage the same amount of youth that they normally do because they didn't have correct contact information and/or didn't see them in the community
 - Nearly all providers altered operating schedules or had fewer staff working on site because of social distancing;
- While we cannot quantify the extent to which this was an issue, the shift to an online, self-administered tool may have also kept youth would have preferred to do the survey with a case manager from participating.



Impact of Covid-19 on HYC Implementation

- *The End Youth Homelessness Act* requires that the HYC go beyond the *Homeless Services Reform Act*-defined homelessness (people who are unsheltered or residing in emergency shelters and transitional housing) to include youth who are unstably housed. TCP has typically provided these as two separate numbers (“literally homeless” and “housing insecure”).
- Without a formal definition or primary data repository on housing insecurity (esp. one that captures the unique drivers for youth), our methodology has historically involved counting someone as housing insecure when their survey responses indicate that they are neither literally homeless nor *stably* housed.
- Because we know youth are undercounted and there are challenges reaching youth through traditional means, we have tried to pair survey responses with other data on the number of youth who are *economically* insecure, while recognizing that was a “best available” information source and not a primary one (as HMIS is for data on literal homelessness).
- However, in 2020, the sources historically used for data on housing/economic insecurity were either not made available to TCP or sites where surveys were conducted were impacted as described on the previous slide.
- TCP's access to the full scope of literally homeless data (through HMIS and provider agreements) led us to focus this year's analysis on only youth experiencing (HSRA-defined) homelessness because we could be more certain about its completeness.

Results

- 651 youth (unaccompanied and heads of household) were counted during HYC.
- Singles made up 68% of youth counted, up from 60% of the count in 2019.
- The increased number of unaccompanied youth drove the overall increase, with youth heads of family households decreasing from year to year.
- 2.6% of youth counted are minors as opposed to TAYs.

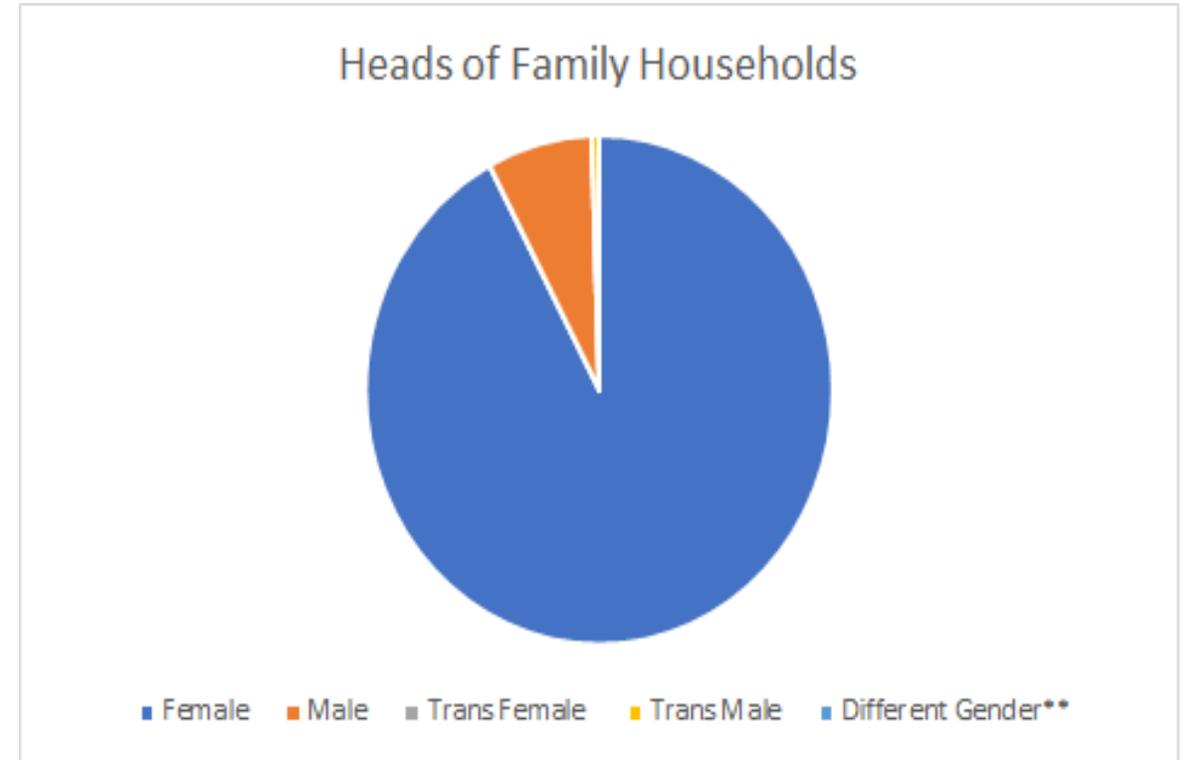
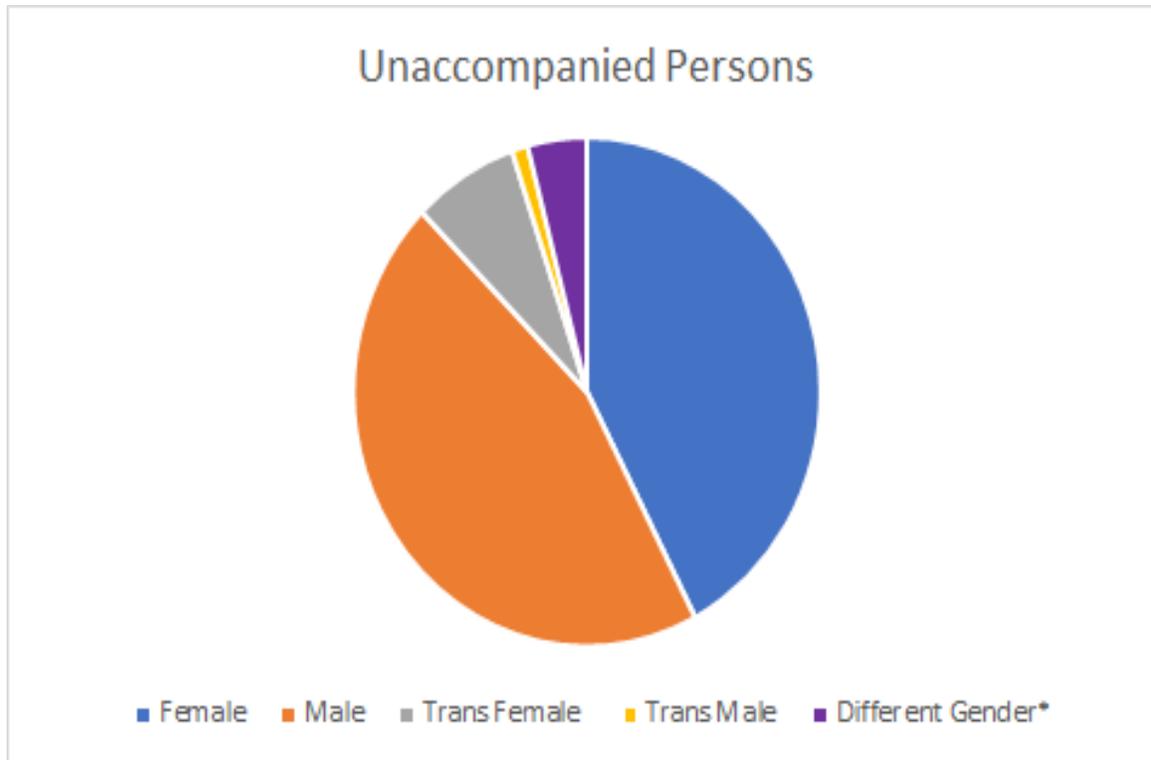
2020 and 2019 HYC Literally Homeless Persons Count Totals			
Population	2020 Totals	2019 Totals	% Change
All Persons	651	622	5%
Singles	445	373	19%
Transition Age Youth (18 - 24)	429	360	19%
Unaccompanied Minors (Under 18)	16	13	23%
Family Heads of Household (HoH)	206	249	-17%
Transition Age Youth (18 - 24)	205	248	-17%
Minors (Under 18)	1	1	0%

Demographics

Race & Ethnicity	Persons Counted (n=651)	%
Race		
American Indian or Alaska Native	14	2.2%
Asian	11	1.7%
Black or African American	542	85.4%
Middle Eastern or North African*	4	0.6%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2	0.3%
White	42	6.6%
Multiple Races	20	3.1%
<i>Data Not Collected</i>	<i>16</i>	
Ethnicity		
Hispanic/Latinx	65	10.2%
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latinx	573	89.8%
<i>Data Not Collected</i>	<i>13</i>	

Demographics

Gender



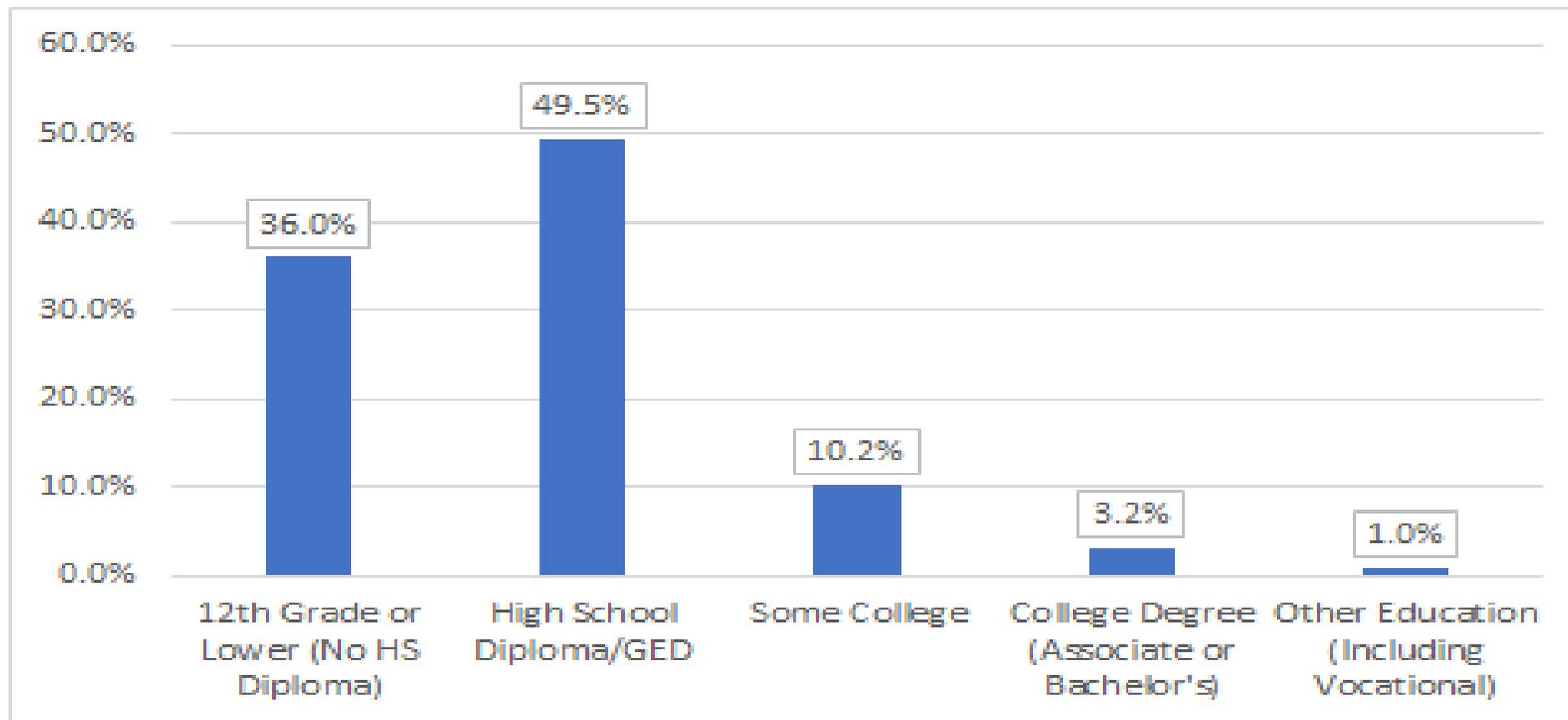
**Includes Gender Queer, Non-Binary, Gender Non-Conforming options from survey tool.*

Demographics

Sexual Orientation and LGBTQ+ identification

- 71% of youth identified as straight or heterosexual while 29% identified as having an orientation other than heterosexual.
- Looking at responses from the sexual orientation and gender identity questions together, we found that 31% of youth surveyed identified as LGBTQ+
 - This was true for 40% of unaccompanied individuals and for 14% of family heads of households

Education



Education

University	Respondents Attending	University Supplied Housing Resource Info
American University	1	No
Bowie State University	1	No
College of the Holy Cross	1	No
Full Sail University	1	No
Georgetown University	1	Yes
Montgomery College	1	No
Prince George Community College	1	No
Prospect College	1	No
Strayer University	1	No
Trinity Washington University	2	Yes
University of the District of Columbia	9	No
University of Phoenix	1	No
Other	2	No
<i>In College But Did Not Provide School Name</i>	43	<i>n/a</i>

Personal History & Systems Involvement

- 91% of all youth respondents stated that they were living in the District when at their last permanent address, up from 83% in 2019.
- As noted on the Education slide, half of youth respondents noted that they a high school diploma or GED; one fourth of all respondents were currently in school or an educational program (as of September 2020).
- 38% of all youth reported histories of mental illness, while 27% reported "Other" concerns including: chronic health conditions and developmental or physical disabilities.
- 34% of unaccompanied youth and 39% of youth heads of family households reported histories of domestic or intimate partner violence.
- 23% of youth reported that they were Child Welfare System-involved in the past, and 18% reported that they had been Justice-system involved.

Takeaways

- The reduction in youth-headed family households is tied to the overall reduction in the number of families in the system – I.e. the closure of the motel overflow sites, shift to Short Term Family Housing and expansion of Rapid Rehousing
- The increase in singles – which led to the overall increase in the count for HYC2020 – was driven by additional capacity in the system (new programs) even if some were serving fewer people in September
- Educational attainment was flat from year to year among singles, but fewer family heads of household reported having their high school diploma or GED in 2020 than 2019; fewer go on to higher levels of edu. – both speak to the need to tighten connections with the education system
- Prevalence of mental health conditions or other disabilities point to need for behavioral health and treatment resources for youth
- TCP/ICH working with CFSA to better understand overlap between foster care and homeless services systems; hoping to expand this type of work with other agencies

Preparing for HYC 2021

- TCP continue to use HMIS and leverage partnerships in homeless services to complete the literally homeless portion of the count.
- Feedback regarding the use of the survey app was positive though we are hopeful that there will be more opportunity for it to be administered in person (though still electronically) for those who prefer to go through the questions with someone else.
- TCP is working on ways to expand the reach of the survey for better information on housing insecurity
 - We are hoping to partner with an agency that is equipped to survey households on a larger scale to determine a more reliable District-wide number of housing insecure youth; and/or
 - Work with us to develop a more precise definition of "housing insecurity" and to identify new sources of information and/or survey sites that would expand the survey's reach as well.

Thank you!

Casa Ruby- Ruby Corado, Rikki Nathanson, Charmaine Eccles, Alexis Blackmon, and all shelter and drop in staff

Catholic Charities- Alex Lucard, Paola Flores, Veronica Thomassesay, Nadya Richberg, Vanessa Okechukwu, Eileen Teckham, Johanna Squires, Elizabeth Coleman, Damon Williams, Carolyn Mburu, Cheryl Irving, and all shelter staff

Central Union Mission- Sylvia Johnson, and all staff

Collaborative Solutions for Communities- Christabel Okafor, Aesha Spruill, and all staff

Community Connections- Chris Fischer and all staff

Community Family Life Services- Ashley McSwain, Katherine Sponaugle, and all staff

Community of Hope- Emily Droder and all staff

Covenant House- Kevin Bauer, Tiffany Brown, Lauren Puryear, and all staff

DASH- Rodney Fuller, Crystal Jacobs, and all staff

DC Doors- Janethe Peña, Ashlee Robinson, and all shelter and Zoe's Doors staff

DC SAFE- Jenny Wesberry and all staff

DCPL Libraries- Jean Badalamenti, Arrien Davison, Joanna Harris, Toni Jackson, and all staff and volunteers

DCPS Schools- Tierra Washington, Timothy Durant, and all staff

Echelon Community Services- Monique Banks, JaNese Simon, Warda Davis, Krystal Robinson, and all staff

Edgewood/Brookland FSC- Kristen Wolford, LaShone Bell, and all staff

Friendship Place- Tiffini Jackson, Antwan Gillis, Sierra Combs-Barnedo, Sheila Suarez, Marni Loffman, and all outreach and drop in staff

Healthy Babies- Jazmine Brazier, Regine Elie, and all staff

HER- Rebecca Kellett and all staff

Housing Up- Letisha Moise and all staff

HIPS- Alexandra Bradley, Cindy Binette, Shakita Chapman, Shaunice Graham, and all staff

Joseph's House- Lina Cortas and all staff

KBEC Group- Kimberly Jelks, Monique Murdock-Barr, and all staff

LAYC- Andrea Bernad Barnola, Marcos Nuñez Janeth Chrolango, Eskayra Pagan, Aldo Hurtado, Jessica Yepez, Taylor Pinckney, and all shelter and drop in staff

My Sister's Place- Valerie Graff, Toshira Monroe, and all staff

OSSE RE-Engagement Center- Roderic Irby, Dana Simpson, Dietrich Trent, and all staff

Salvation Army- Suzanne Walker, William Kelly, Heather Campbell, and all staff

Sasha Bruce- Pam Lieber, Ivana Gutierrez, Mercedes Daley, Donnell Potts, and all shelter and drop in staff

SHY Youth Action Board- Briana Whitfield, Kyla Woods, D'Vontay Hope, Litzi Valdivia-Cazzol, Stephen Dewey, Aaron White, and all other participants

SMYAL- Jorge Membreño, Q Garcia-Geary, and all shelter and drop in staff

So Others May Eat- Nechama Masliansky, Keesha Tyler, and all staff

Wanda Alston Foundation- Lyn Williams, Jamy Drapeza, and all shelter staff

YHDP Fellows- D'Vontay Hope, Kyla Woods, and Stephen Dewey



YOUTH COUNT DC